

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This chapter illustrates the conclusions and recommendations of the study in five main areas: (1) summary of the study, (2) conclusions, (3) respondents' suggestions, (4) limitations of the study, and (5) recommendations for further research.

#### **6.1 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY**

The summary of the study will be divided into three parts as follows:

##### **6.1.1 Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this study was to determine how American, Japanese and Thai employees working in international organizations in Thailand differently perceive factors that affect intercultural communication success, face intercultural communication barriers and adapt to people from different cultures.

This study has tested three hypotheses associated with intercultural communication among American, Japanese and Thai employees working in international organizations in Thailand. The first hypothesis addressed the difference in perceptions of American, Japanese and Thai employees towards the factors that affect intercultural communication success. The second hypothesis addressed the difference in perceptions of American, Japanese and Thai employees concerning intercultural communication barriers. The last hypothesis addressed the difference in the perceptions of American, Japanese and Thai employees towards adapting to people from different cultures.

##### **6.1.2 Research Questions**

The research questions of this study were composed of personal information and experience with foreigners, factors that affect intercultural communication success, intercultural communication barriers and intercultural adaptation.

### **6.1.3 Subjects, Materials, and Procedures**

The sample population of this study was American, Japanese and Thai employees who were working in international organizations in Thailand.

The questionnaire was distributed in three languages: English for the American employees, Japanese for the Japanese employees and Thai for the Thai employees. Meanwhile, the questions of personal interviews were conducted in two languages: English for the American and Japanese employees, and Thai language for the Thai employees.

From October 2007 to March 2008, the 776 questionnaires were distributed to American, Japanese and Thai employees who are working in 69 international organizations in Thailand. Meanwhile, the personal interviews were conducted during July and August 2008.

The results of 402 questionnaires, which were completed by 134 American, 134 Japanese, and 134 Thai employees, were analyzed for this study. Then, three employees (one American, one Japanese, and one Thai) were interviewed in order to support the findings of the questionnaires.

Frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation and one-way Analysis of variance (ANOVA) both between groups and multiple comparisons at the significance level of .05 ( $p=0.05$ ) were calculated for data analysis.

## **6.2 CONCLUSIONS**

The four parts of the study are concluded as follows:

### **6.2.1 Personal Information and Experience with Foreigners**

6.2.1.1 The majority of the American and Japanese respondents were male while that of Thai respondents were female.

6.2.1.2 Most of the American and Thai respondents were 21-30 years old while most of Japanese respondents were 31-40 years old with a Bachelor's degree.

6.2.1.3 The majority of the foreign colleagues of American and Japanese respondents were Thais while more than half of the foreign colleagues of Thai respondents were Japanese.

6.2.1.4 As most of the foreign colleagues of Japanese respondents were Thais, one-third of them used the Thai language to communicate at work. Meanwhile, the majority of American and Thai respondents used English to communicate with their foreign colleagues.

6.2.1.5 Most of the American, Japanese and Thai respondents had taken language courses in order for them to communicate with their foreign colleagues more efficiently.

6.2.1.6 The majority of the American, Japanese and Thai respondents had worked with foreigners before working in their current organizations and had foreign friends.

## **6.2.2 Factors that Affect Intercultural Communication Success**

The findings showed the significance of perceptions of factors that affect the intercultural communication success of American, Japanese and Thai employees in terms of relationships, communication climates and time. It was found that even though American, Japanese and Thai employees perceived factors that affect intercultural communication success differently at the significance level of .001, Thai employees seemed to be more successful than American and Japanese employees. The results demonstrated that Thai employees considered relationships as very important in working with other people. They believed that if their relationship with their colleagues is not good, it is very difficult to get a job done easily. As a result, they tended to hide their real feelings or their disagreement in order to make people around them feel happy. Moreover, it was found that even though Thai employees feel uncomfortable in focusing on time and pushing for a job to finish immediately, they tended to be punctual for work and job assignments. As a result, Thai employees seemed to deal with time more comfortably.

## **6.2.3 Intercultural Communication Barriers**

The findings explained the significance of facing the problems of intercultural communication for American, Japanese and Thai employees in terms of communication skills and attitudes. It was found that even though American, Japanese and Thai employees face the problems of intercultural communication

differently at the significance level of .000, American employees seemed to face fewer problems in intercultural communication than Japanese and Thai employees. The results illustrated that American employees seemed to be better at communication skills than Japanese and Thai employees because most of the American employees use English to communicate at the workplace, so they have few problems in speaking, listening, reading or even writing. Moreover, American employees believed that understanding their foreign colleagues' cultures is very important in working with people from different cultures, so they were more likely to be open and adapt to their foreign colleagues. As a result, it was found that American employees seemed to have more positive attitudes towards themselves and other people than Japanese and Thai employees.

#### **6.2.4 Intercultural Adaptation**

The findings indicated the significance of adapting to people from different cultures for American, Japanese and Thai employees in terms of improving empathy, encouraging feedback, acquiring social and cultural knowledge and increasing contact. It was found that even though American, Japanese and Thai employees adapt to people from different cultures differently at the significance level of .000, American employees seemed to feel more comfortable in adapting themselves to people from different cultures than Japanese and Thai employees. The results explained that American employees agreed that trying to adapt to people from different cultures is essential in working in a multi-cultural environment, so they are more willing not only to improve their ability to empathize with their foreign colleagues, but also to spend time with their foreign colleagues in order to learn and understand them much more.

### **6.3 RESPONDENTS' SUGGESTIONS**

The suggestions of the respondents are as follows:

6.3.1 An organization should provide language and cultural training in order for members in the organization to improve their efficiency in communicating and understanding other cultures.

6.3.2 The more experience one has with foreigners, the better able he/she is to adapt to people from different cultures.

6.3.3 The chance to participate in activities can encourage members in the organization to build relationships with other members of the organization and to adapt to others more easily.

6.3.4 Communication skills are an important factor in working with people from different cultures, but understanding other cultures is much more important.

6.3.5 The position level of the respondents will help to analyze how a person who has a lower status tries to adapt to a person who has a higher status or vice versa.

6.3.6 The period of time that foreigners work in Thailand is very important because a person who has experience with foreign colleagues tends to be able to adapt to their foreign colleagues better.

#### **6.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the limitations of the study are as follows:

6.4.1 Due to the influence of the increasing globalization, the results of the study are constantly changing depending on different aspects and situations.

6.4.2 As personal interviews were conducted with only three respondents (one American, one Japanese and one Thai), their personal opinions do not necessarily represent cultures, communication behaviors, attitudes and thoughts of the whole American, Japanese and Thai respondents who are working in Thailand.

6.4.3 Since cultural dimensions are varied, learning about the cultural diversity can help people who have different cultures gain more understanding of people who they are living and working with in a diverse society.

#### **6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the recommendations for further study are as follows:

6.5.1 It is advised that a study of the perceptions of foreigners working in Thailand towards communication behaviors of their Thai colleagues is very useful so

that the researcher will know how people from different cultures perceive the Thai communication behaviors.

6.5.2 The findings reveal that conflict management, conflict resolution should be investigated. As each organization has many people from different cultures working together, different management as well as different resolutions must be used and dealt with in order to resolve the conflict in a useful and effective way.

6.5.3 It has been suggested that comparative study should be conducted because at present, there are many nationalities doing business in Thailand, so the problems of cultural differences could happen all the time. Therefore, a study of the comparison of intercultural communication between Thai and other nationalities employees will be very useful.

6.5.4 It has been implied that more respondents and more personal interviews should be done on this similar issue in order to verify the results.